**CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM**
**BAY-DELTA ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Good afternoon. I'm Molly Wilson with the Shasta County Board of Supervisors, representing District 4. I have participated in the CALFED process on behalf of Shasta County since 1995.

STORAGE

Throughout the process we have repeatedly stressed our concerns about water supply and the need for storage. We continue to advocate for storage. CALFED's analyses say that Alternative 3 will adversely affect water supply availability in the Sacramento Valley, unless there is storage. The CALFED document does not say how big the impact will be or who will sacrifice. However, Shasta County has many CVP contractors and so we would expect to bear the brunt. This is a redirected impact and it should be mitigated with new storage.

WATERSHEDS

Water supply cutbacks are not the only impact that CALFED would pose for the northstate, though, and it may not even be the most significant. CALFED's Water Quality and Watershed Management proposals would impact Shasta County, its land and its resource-based economy. Much of California is densely developed for urban use and for agriculture. In contrast, Shasta County has space, two and a half million acres of it, 95 percent of which is native vegetation. This is our county's wealth. Without these forests and other lands, without their proper management, and without their use for our livelihoods, this county will suffer.

STORMWATER RUNOFF

The Water Quality program proposed by CALFED would impose unacceptable burdens on landowners. I understand that there would be mandatory limits for all types of materials that might find their way into runoff. Businesses and individuals would be responsible for filtering out anything and everything that might find its way into their runoff. This would include sediment, dust, and oil droppings from cars. This would particularly hit small businesses. The corner store owner with a few parking spaces could be held accountable for what drips off of a customers' car.

There are no effective ways for a small property owner to separate out a trace of motor oil or other substance that has mixed with rainwater. Oil-water separators can't reliably remove these traces, and they can only treat a few gallons per minute. With the intense storms that routinely sweep the northstate, a one-acre parking lot sheds hundreds of gallons per minute, for hours on end. It just isn't practical to try to treat this much water.



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Controlling erosion is also very difficult during wet winters, such as this last one. Developers are already required to take reasonable measures to control erosion. With CALFED, responsible businessmen could find themselves in serious legal trouble if a powerful storm overwhelms a silt fence, or slips around a hay bale. Faced with such risks, many desirable and much-needed projects, including schools, factories and housing, would quickly become unattractive or unfeasible.

TIMBER

Timber harvests have historically been an important part of the local economy. The economic benefits of a timber harvest ripple through the community, building stable families and businesses and providing direct cash for roads and schools. Unfortunately, harvests have been sharply reduced in recent years, due to regulations. Severe erosion control regulations would wipe out most of what is left of this industry. Access to remote stands of timber requires road construction; there is simply no way around it.

Aside from the direct economic benefits, timber harvesting is an integral part of forest management today, together with selective cutting and controlled burns. Historically, fires burned through the forests periodically, every 10-20 years, taking out the understory brush and creating varied habitat. Old photos clearly show that the forests of a hundred years ago were far more open underneath than the tangled mat that we are today confronted with. This was better habitat, and timber harvesting and forest management can help to restore such conditions.

FOUNTAIN FIRE

Our forests are becoming tinderboxes full of ladder fuels. We don't need to look far away or far into the future to see where this leads. The Fountain Fire of 1992 showed us. A small fire climbed to the canopy and burned very hot for many days over a wide area. A beautiful, mature forest now has a 100 square mile hole in it, a vast, unbroken wasteland. A small understory fire will improve habitat, but this burn was too large, and the fire was too hot. Animals won't venture into the vast open expanse. The heat of the fire glazed the soil so runoff is accelerated and plants cannot take root. This was a natural disaster, but it was greatly accelerated by high fuel loads resulting from historical watershed management practices.

Erosion within the burn has begun, not on the limited and controlled scale of a small construction site or along a logging road, but on a massive scale. Distances in the burn are so vast and the terrain is so damaged that it is difficult to see and appreciate the volumes of soil on the move. However, every now and then something brings it into focus and provides a point of reference to the disaster that is still unfolding, six years later. Last years' New Years Storm afforded such an opportunity in a very small community along Montgomery Creek, above the town of Montgomery Creek.

Montgomery Creek is a steep creek, maybe thirty feet wide and eight feet deep, and it drains a portion of the burn. During the storm, two logs blocked the creek. Within hours, thousands of cubic yards of gravel filled the entire creek bed for hundreds of feet upstream. The gravel was solid enough to drive trucks on. Then the creek cut a new channel through the woods. The creek was flowing through a dense woods so thousands and thousands of cubic yards of logs caught up on the trees and created a pile of wooden debris, hundreds of feet wide and stretching far downstream.

This is going on in the Fountain Fire burn area every winter. The sediment and the debris is moving into and along the beds of the rivers and streams, muddying up the water and filling the reservoirs. Shasta Lake and the Sacramento River were chocolate-colored all summer long. This "chocolate" came from the Fountain Fire burn. And the Fountain Fire will repeat itself again and again unless fuel loadings are managed. The Fountain Fire took out about three percent of our land area. Big as it was, that still leaves 97% of our land area potentially vulnerable.

CLOSING

Every day, the burn discharges sediment to the waters of the United States. Timber harvesting and access into the forests would help to prevent such massive wildfires. CALFED would impose severe erosion control requirements upon such endeavors, making them far less feasible. However, no such regulations apply to the Fountain Fire, nor will they apply to the next such "natural" catastrophe, which will undoubtably will happen in the absence of management and access to the forests. This is a fundamental contradiction in CALFED's approach to the watersheds and one that I would encourage you to resolve by allowing timber harvest and watershed management practices to proceed.

Thank you.